BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

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July 21, 2000

highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Private and Public Investment

- **Private and public sector organizations surveyed in the second quarter were somewhat more optimistic about their investment intentions than at the beginning of the year.** Planned investment in the province is expected to be up 5.3% this year, compared to a projected increase of 2.6% reported in February. The rosier outlook was almost entirely due to investment plans of the public sector, which were revised sharply upward to +10.7%. When they were surveyed in late 1999/early 2000, public sector organizations in the province had indicated that they expected their investment to fall 1.5% during 2000. Private sector organizations have made little change to their investment plans for the year, with total spending on machinery, equipment and structures expected to rise 3.9%, revised only marginally from the anticipated 3.7% increase reported in February. *Source: SC, Catalogue 61-206-XIB*

- **Public sector spending on machinery and equipment is expected to rise 17.4% during 2000, while investment in structures is anticipated to be 8.4% higher than last year.** In the private sector, purchases of machinery and equipment are forecast to decline 5.9% during 2000. However, planned spending on structures is expected to be 10.6% higher during the year as residential construction activity in the province begins to pick up. Investment in housing is forecast to increase 2.6% this year, following two years of decline. *Source: SC, Catalogue 61-206-XIB*

- **Among the regions, the northern territories of Nunavut (+20.7%) and NWT (+14.6%) are expected to experience the strongest investment growth this year, largely due to spending in the mining sector.** Alberta (+8.4%), Yukon (+8.3%) and Ontario (+7.5%) are all expected to see investment increase at rates well above the national average of 5.3%. BC was ranked eighth among the 13 provinces and territories in terms of anticipated investment growth. Nova Scotia (-19.7%) was the only region where investment was expected to drop substantially during the year. *Source: SC, Catalogue 61-206-XIB*

The Economy

- **Exports of BC products were 14.6% higher this May than in the same month last year.** The increase in the value of exports came as international shipments of all commodities except automotive products (-14.8%) rose. Automotive products account for a relatively small share (about 3%) of BC's total exports. Forest products, BC's dominant export product (at just over 50% of the total), were up 12.1% in May.

  Canadian exports rose 20.8%, as five provinces boosted their exports more than 25%. Manitoba (+45.0%) and Alberta (+39.8%) posted the strongest gains. Manitoba's increase was driven by machinery and equipment exports (+160.1%). In Alberta, the energy sector (+46.4%) continued to fuel export growth, but at rates somewhat lower than the heady increases seen earlier in the year. The strong performance of the energy sector was supplemented by an 86.0% increase in machinery and equipment exports from that province. *Source: Statistics Canada*

  Seasonally adjusted export data for BC will be released next week

- **During the first five months of the year, BC's exports to the US (+8.9%) and Japan (+4.3%), which together account for about 80% of the total, have not grown as much as exports to other markets.** In particular, exports to Western Europe have increased by a third (+33.8%) and significant gains have been made in the value of goods shipped to other parts of Asia, most nota-

Report **Participation rates of BC women, 1976 to 1999**

Did you know...
Canadian counterfeiters were less active last year than in 1998. There were 36,168 incidents of counterfeiting reported in 1999, down from 39,830 in 1998. But the presses are still rolling a lot faster than they used to. In 1995, the total was 20,375.

bly South Korea (+34.1%) and China (+38.1%).
Source: BC STATS

- **Shipments of goods manufactured in the province recovered in May, increasing 1.1% (seasonally adjusted) after falling 4.2% in the previous month.** The improvement was largely due to strength in the durables sector, where shipments rose 2.0% despite a downturn (-0.5%) in the dominant wood manufacturing industry. Manufacturers of transportation equipment (+21.4%), machinery and equipment (+8.4%) and fabricated metals (+2.9%) all posted strong gains as they recovered from April's downturn. Producers of non-durables (-0.1%) did not fare as well. Manufacturers of petroleum and coal products (+8.7%), clothing (+6.6%) and paper and related products (+1.7%) were the only major industries in the sector to see shipments increase in May.

  Canadian shipments were up 3.4% in May, led by strong gains in Newfoundland (+8.3%) and Alberta (+7.9%). Increases in the rest of the country ranged from +1.1% in BC to +4.6% in Nova Scotia. PEI (-4.3%) and New Brunswick (-4.2%) were the only provinces where shipments fell between April and May. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Retail sales in the province weakened in May, falling 1.2% (seasonally adjusted).** Sales by BC retailers have been sluggish during the first five months of 2000, increasing only once during this period. However, year-to-date sales were up 4.8% from the first five months of 1999.

  Sales were down in seven of the country's 13 regions in May. Ontario (+1.7%), Saskatchewan (+1.1%) and Manitoba (+0.9%) were the only provinces where retailers made significant gains. Canadian sales rose a modest 0.4% between April and May, largely due to gains in the automotive sector (+1.5%). Sales by retailers of new and used vehicles, auto parts and accessories, and gasoline service stations were all stronger than in the previous month. Compared to May of 1999, gas station receipts were up more than 20%, boosted by higher prices at the pump.
  Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sales by BC wholesalers were down 0.5% (seasonally adjusted) in May, marking the second straight monthly decline.** Wholesale sales in the province have been seesawing during most of the last year. PEI (-0.7%) and Saskatchewan (-7.8%) were the only other provinces where sales declined in May. Canadian sales were up 1.3%, reflecting improvements in most sectors. Sales of lumber (+4.8%) and other metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment (+3.9%) bounced back from a poor showing in April. However, BC lumber wholesalers did not benefit as much from the recovery as those in other parts of the country. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Crime

- **British Columbia's police-reported crime rate fell in 1999, decreasing to 11,586 crimes reported for every 100,000 people living in the province.** A total of 466,115 crimes were reported in BC last year, over half (272,021) of them property crimes such as theft or breaking and entering. In addition, 51,637 violent crimes (including 110 homicides) and 142,457 property crimes were reported to the police during 1999.

  Despite the decline, BC's crime rate (11,586 per 100,000 population) remained one of the highest in the country. Saskatchewan (12,155) was the only province where the number of crimes reported relative to the size of the population was higher than in BC. Among the other provinces, crime rates ranged from a low of 5,921 in PEI to 10,574 in Manitoba. Crime rates in the North were much higher than in the rest of Canada, varying from 18,074 in Nunavut to 24,040 in NWT. This reflects a much higher incidence of crimes such as assault, breaking and entry and mischief in the North compared to other parts of the country. The Canadian crime rate was 7,733.

  While crime rates in all categories were significantly higher in BC than the national average, the discrepancy was largest for property crimes (6,761 compared to the national rate of 4,266) and smallest for violent crimes (1,284 versus 955).
  Source: SC, Juristat Catalogue 85-002, Vol.20, No. 5

For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

July 21, 2000

Infoline Report:

Labour force participation rates of BC women, 1976 to 1999

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Originally published in the May 2000 issue, *Labour Force Statistics.* Annual subscription: $60 + GST

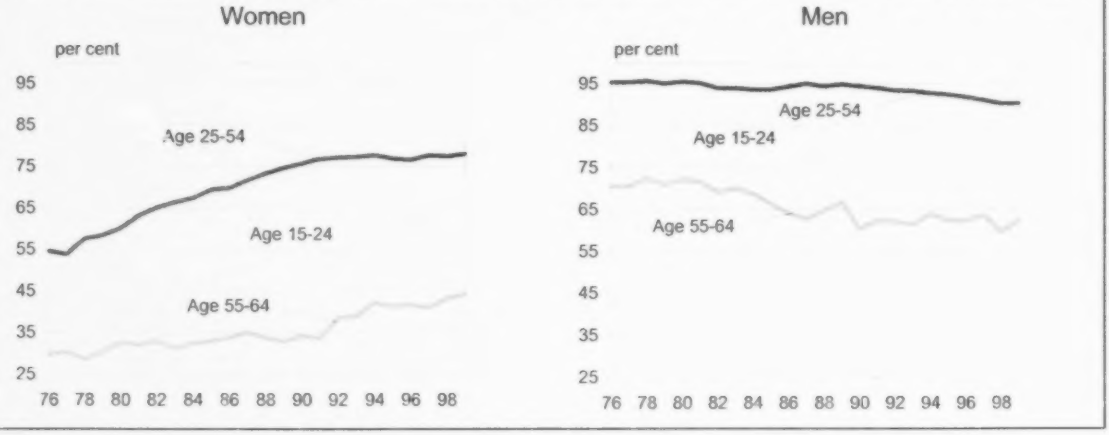
Summary . . . Labour force participation (the proportion of working aged persons either employed or unemployed) of B.C. women saw substantial gains during the late-1970s and through the 1980s. During the 1990s the aggregate women's labour force participation rate held relatively constant. Declines among female youth (due to their increased participation in schooling, particularly post-secondary education and training), have offset continued increases among women aged 25 to 64 during the 1990s. Women in the core working age group of 25 to 54 with higher levels of educational attainment continued to see much higher labour force participation rates during the 1990s. The gap between men and women's labour force participation is notably smaller for those with higher levels of educational attainment. Much of the gain in aggregate women's labour force participation since 1976 was paced by women with spouses who have either school-aged or preschool-aged children. In fact, the latter group is one of the only groups of B.C. women during the 1990s whose labour force participation rate continued to rise.

Labour Force Participation Rates of Women and Men by Age . . . During the 1970s and 1980s women aged 15 to 64 saw strong growth in labour force participation, which then held relatively constant during the 1990s. For women in the core age group of 25 to 54, labour force participation increased by over 21 percentage points between 1976 and 1990, but then rose only a further 2 percentage points between 1990 and 1999.

Labour force participation among men in the core age group of 25 to 54 has historically always been higher than for like-aged women. Core-aged men saw little change during the 1970s and 1980s, but during the 1990s their labour force participation rate declined from 94 per cent to 90 per cent.

Labour force participation among women aged 15 to 24 also rose in the 1970s and 1980s although less sharply than for core aged women. Female youth labour force participation rose by 13 percentage points between 1976 and 1990, but by 1999 it had fallen back to the same level as in 1976. During the 1990s the fall in labour force participation among female youth (and male youth) was due in large part to increases in their schooling participation, especially post-secondary participation. Students, particularly full-time students, are less likely to be in the labour force than non- students.

Figure 1: Labour Force Participation Rates of B.C. Women and Men by Age Group, 1976 - 1999



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By 1999, labour force participation rates between young women and men were virtually the same. However it should also be noted that by 1999, female youth in B.C. had a higher schooling participation rate than male youth.

Women aged 55 to 64 have historically had relatively low labour force participation rates. Many women in this age cohort at present and in the past had very different life experiences in terms of paid work opportunities, educational opportunities and societal expectations than young women today. Given the changes that have occurred on a number of these factors, the labour force participation rate among women 55 to 64 will continue to climb in the future, especially as baby boom women begin to enter this cohort in the next several years.

By contrast, men aged 55 to 64 saw their labour force participation generally fall during the 1970s and 1980s, much of this due to voluntary early retirement. During the 1990s, their participation rate held fairly steady, suggesting any ongoing increases in early retirement have stopped.

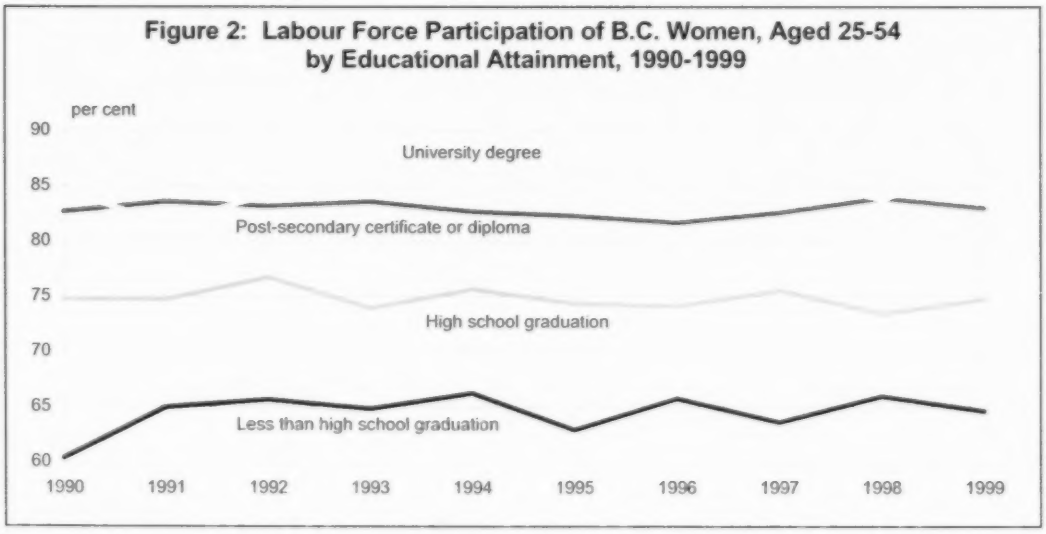
Labour Force Participation of Core-Aged Women 25-54 by Educational Attainment . . . Figure 2 shows that in the 1990s B.C. women who completed post-secondary education continued to be more likely to be participating in the labour force than those with less education. Participation rates remained almost flat during the 1990s among core aged women in all educational attainment categories. Men saw a similar pattern except for a notable decline in labour force participation for men with less than high school completion. Core-aged female participation rates in the labour force in 1999 ranged from about 65 per cent for those with less than a high school diploma, to 85 per cent for those with a university degree.

Various explanations for these ongoing trends relate to higher earnings for those with more education and possibly stronger career aspirations which provide an incentive to participate in the labour force. For those with children, higher earnings posed against child care costs is also an explanatory factor.

As to why the participation rates of the least educated women have remained steady, it may be the pool of jobs available to lesser educated workers is shrinking at about the same rate as the decline in the number of lesser educated core aged persons.

Finally, it should be noted the gap between men's and women's labour force participation rates is notably smaller for those with higher levels of educational attainment.

Figure 2: Labour Force Participation of B.C. Women, Aged 25-54 by Educational Attainment, 1990-1999



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Participation of Women by Family Status . . . Figure 3 shows the labour force participation rates of women by selected family status. For women who are married or have a common-law spouse and whose youngest child is between the ages of 6 and 15, labour force participation has risen 25 percentage points between 1976 and 1990, but remained little changed in the 1990s.

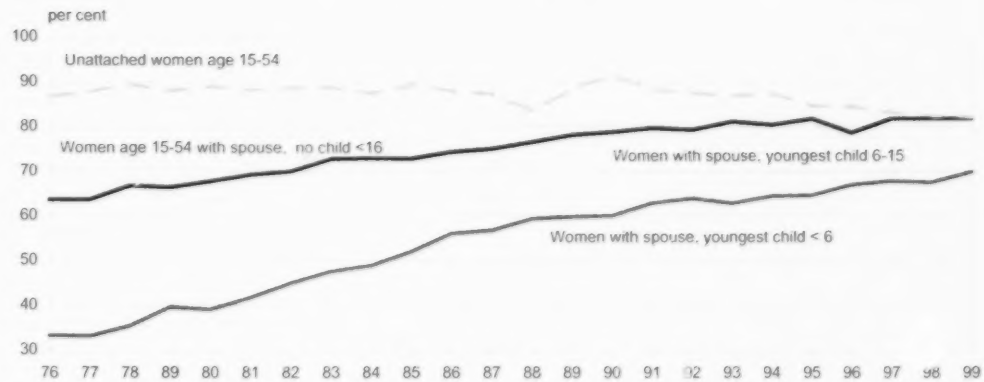
An even more dramatic increase in labour force participation is seen among women (with spouses) whose youngest child is less than 6 years old. In 1976 only one woman in three with preschool-aged children was participating in the labour force. By 1990, 59.9 per cent were participating and this rate has continued to climb throughout the 1990s to 68.7 per cent in 1999.

Women with spouses who had no children under the age of 16 have historically had higher participation rates than women with children under age 16. Their participation rates have risen from 63.5 per cent in 1976 and leveled off at about 81 per cent throughout the 1990s.

Women who have no spouse, but do have children or someone else in the household to care for are a relatively small group (not shown). On average, participation rates among this group were considerably higher than their counterparts with spouses in 1976, but remained relatively flat throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Participation rates among women with spouses who have children had by 1999 caught up with, or in some cases surpassed, the group with no spouses. Women with spouses with preschool or school-age children have been a major contributing factor to the overall increase in women's labour force participation in the last twenty years.

The highest participation rates among women continue to be unattached individuals under the age of 55. These women have historically had participation rates similar to those of unattached men, and during the 1990s their rates (like those of unattached men) have started to decline from a high of 91.4 per cent in 1990 to 82.0 per cent in 1999. This was due in large part to young unattached women increasing their participation in education and training.

Figure 3: Labour Force Participation Rates for B.C. Women by Family Status


per cent
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
Unattached women age 15-54
Women age 15-54 with spouse, no child <16
Women with spouse, youngest child 6-15
Women with spouse, youngest child < 6
76 77 78 89 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

Infoline

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/00	% change on one year ago
BC	4,043.7	0.9
Canada	30,606.7	0.9
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1998	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	110,948	-0.2
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	99,708	0.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	24,908	-0.8
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	15,969	-1.6
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) May	3,275	8.7
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	2,559	9.0
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) May	2,879	4.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Jun '00	one year ago
BC	113.2	1.5
Canada	113.7	2.9
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jun '00	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,092	0.4
Employed - BC	1,952	2.5
Unemployed - BC	141	-21.9
		Jun '99
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	6.7	8.7
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.6	7.5
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 19/00	Jul 21/99
Prime Business Rate	7.50	6.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.90	6.70
- 5 year	8.25	7.50
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 19/00	Jul 21/99
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4756	1.5010
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.6773	0.6668
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jun '00	one year ago
BC	631.46	1.0
Canada	611.09	2.7

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm

Released this week by BC STATS

- Major Projects Inventory, June 2000 (Issue 00:02)
- Exports, May 2000

Next week

- Small Business Quarterly, Fourth Quarter 1999
- Earnings and Employment Trends, June 2000
- Business Indicators, July 2000
- Current Statistics, July 2000

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